

*You'll Be Mine
And
I'll Be Yours*

a Robbins Poem



You'll Be Mine and I'll Be Yours by notalone91

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You'll Be Mine and I'll Be Yours

Early 1990 saw a for sale sign take up residence on the front yard of the Denbrough home. The first time Richie and Eddie saw it, adorned with a dozen red balloons, they burst into hysterics. The irony of the whole fucking thing. When they entered the front door, doubled over in laughter, Bill simply rolled his eyes. By spring break their presence was more harrowing. The balloons were the reason they were leaving, after all. The boys had managed to talk their parents into letting them rotate between houses all week, the last two nights being spent at Bill's to help him pack.

They had congregated in the den, all taping and labeling boxes as *Poltergeist* played in the background. All, that is, except Richie, who was sprawled on the couch paging through *Uncanny X-Men* #141 for the billionth time, having been distracted by it on top of the first box he was supposed to tape. As his eyes flitted to the frame with Hank standing over Mystique, he realized there was someone standing over him.

Eddie tapped his foot, kicking the next box closer to him. "Richard Justin Tozier, if you don't fucking move, so help me God-"

"So help you God, what?" he groaned, rolling onto his back and propping up on an elbow, comic cast aside. "Are you going to spank me?" he teased, arching an eyebrow. Once upon a time, his heart wouldn't have hammered at the suggestion. Now, almost a year since their battle with Pennywise, Richie found his own dirty jokes leaving him flustered. He was so screwed. "Good to know your mother's teaching you a thing or two about what I like," he added, trying to cover for himself.

Trying to make himself look as menacing as possible, Eddie scowled and crossed his arms. "Fuck you, dude. I've been standing and helping since we got here." He grabbed Richie by the ankles and tried to swing his legs off to make room for himself.

Digging in, Richie groaned, "And I pedaled both of our asses here so you can deal with the floor unless you want to sit on my lap." He wagged his eyebrows suggestively.

"Really, Rich?" Stan groaned, rolling his eyes at his friends and flopping hard on his back, unfortunately, the only one aware of their mutual pining.

Raising his eyebrows, he mocked his friend's tone spot on. "Yes, really."

Using more force than was truly necessary, Eddie grunted in the effort to dislodge him. "You should have your head examined if you think for a second I'm going to be anywhere near you when you-" before he could finish, Richie's foot was firmly dug into his knee and he was dropping back onto the couch between Richie's legs with an overdramatic "Oof." He struggled briefly to regain his footing, but Richie had him restrained in a tight hug, his hands resting surely on his waist. "What the fuck, Richie?" he huffed. Despite himself, Eddie's pulse raced then slowed, both excited and calmed by the touch.

"Sorry, Eds. My hand slipped," Richie laughed, feeling much braver than he normally did where this was involved. "Leg, too," he added, sending a chill up Eddie's spine. "Now, you're sitting and I didn't have to move. We both get what we wanted."

Bill heaved the roll of packing tape at the boys. "God, you t-t-t-two are annoying," he said, shaking his head.

Eyes pointedly widened, Ben laughed. "You're leaving in a week. You don't have to deal with it for the rest of forever."

"It won't be forever, right?" Mike asked, a little sadder than he meant to. He slid over next to Bill until their forearms brushed against each other.

Frowning, he ran his hand over Mike's gently. "No, of course not." From the corner of his eye, Bill caught a glimpse of Stan's sympathetic stare and flinched. "I have to s-s-save you from Mr. and Mr. Kaspbrak."

"Excuse you, dickhead!" Eddie exclaimed, voice high and strained. "We are not Mr. and Mr. anything, thank you very fucking much." His mannerisms didn't seem to agree, though. In fact, he'd snuggled into the space between Richie's legs and retrieved the comic, putting it a

space where they could both read it

The taller boy pulled him closer and buried his face in his neck. "Sweetcheeks, you're embarrassing me," he crooned, knocking his knee against Eddie's hip. "It's like you don't want to be my husband anymore." Eddie thought first a moment that he might have an aneurysm or a heart attack or something. He couldn't believe that Richie was actually saying that. He tried to ignore the nervous flip his stomach did at the mere idea of maybe...

"You know," Stan said, balling up a piece of filler paper and chucking it at the boys, "when we had that play wedding when we were ten, you guys didn't have to immediately turn into an old married couple."

Eddie slid his left hand up to cup Richie's neck, patting it demonstratively. "He couldn't handle me as a husband." He leaned back and rested flush against Richie. From his vantage point, he couldn't see the blush that painted the boy's cheeks.

It came to pass that their bickering never subsided. In truth, it was fun. Even after everything that had happened, defeating It and getting engaged, they found little ways to needle each other. Somehow, dinner made its way into the argument radar that night. "You are no help at all, Rich," Eddie said, splaying take-out menus across the island, hoping something would catch Richie's eye.

Folding his arms and burying his head in them, Richie let out a guttural sigh and pushed his glasses up on the bridge of his nose. "Eds, it's dinner," he said, exhausted after his 8th consecutive day of writer's rooms for his new Netflix special and trying to be sympathetic to Eddie's position. He knew he could be more opinionated with the wedding plans, but as far as he cared, one of the losers getting ordained online and exchanging I Love Yous barefoot in their kitchen and toasting with beer over takeout burgers and fries would have been a-ok with him. He'd do that tonight if it would ease Eddie's mind. "I would be perfectly happy with a bologna and cheese sandwich, or I'll cook whatever you have meal planned for tonight, or we can order a pizza, or go out for Mexican." He slid each menu across to him. "It's entirely up to you, babe." He reached his hand to him and rolled it in his, toying his thumb across the titanium engagement band that only he and Eddie knew bore their initials

etched inside, exactly like the rubbing that Eddie had done of their initials he'd carved into the Kissing Bridge in Derry decades earlier.

"It's always up to me," he said, throwing his hands in the air dramatically. "You can't make a single decision ever, can you?"

Richie took a deep breath. Eddie in this state was not Eddie he wanted to push buttons with. "I've decided," he said as calmly as possible before pushing himself up onto one of the barstools, 'that I don't want to fight with you about dinner." He kicked his toe at the molding on the corner, looking a little petulant.

"This isn't about dinner," Eddie yelled, pacing around the kitchen. He propped himself against the counter. He had never liked being babied and now that he had all of his memories back, he found no time for it. It seemed, to Eddie, that Richie only wanted to do what.

"Then, what the hell is it about?" he asked.

"Why does everything have to be my decision?" he asked back like it was the most obvious thing in the world.

"Because you have reasons for everything and I don't," Richie said, standing up and crossing to Eddie, pressing him against the counter with his hips. "I let you make the decisions because none of the little stuff, like dinner, matters to me. As long as I'm next to you, what fucking difference does it make?" He ran his fingers through his fiancé's hair and he melted into his touch. "You plan. You calculate. There is a method behind everything in this Spaghetti head of yours and I will not get in the way of that." Eddie's anger softened with his words. "If you're happy, I'm happy." Finally, Richie smiled, knowing he'd 'won't this 'fight.'

Eddie sighed, rolling his eyes. "Goddammit, Richie," he groaned. He was happy that their biggest fights anymore amounted to nothing. Dinner. What tv show to watch. Things that didn't matter. After their return to Derry, it was all nothing.

Similarly, Richie enjoyed the improved clarity of his memory, allowing him to see just how little head truly changed. They were still just as stupid in love as they were at 13- but now he

remembered! "What now?" he laughed, leaning down to rest his forehead against Eddie's.

Ghosting his fingers up Richie's arms, he shook his head, still wholeheartedly in awe of the man in front of him. "Why do you have to make everything sound so fucking endearing?"

"Because I am fucking endearing," he said, smiling from ear to ear. He kissed him once, lightly. Then, inspired, Richie went back in for a deeper kiss, his lips chased down Eddie's jaw. When they found his pulse point, he hesitated for a moment. After everything, that was one of his favorite spots to kiss, a steady reminder that Eddie was still there- still alive and still his.

Eddie's jaw fell slack, but he couldn't let him off that easy. "No, you're not, you big 'mo," he teased, voice low, knowing that Richie could feel the vibration against his lips.

Sucking down as he hit the neckline of his shirt, he voiced a growling, "You love me."

"Yeah, yeah," he answered, trying to sound as nonplussed as he could. He trailed his hands down to Richie's waist and grabbed on, bracing himself as a different type of hunger surged within him; one that couldn't be sated by take-out or cooking.

Working harder, unbuttoning the top button of Eddie's shirt, Richie voiced a mock offended, "Hey!" He nipped lightly against his collarbone, eliciting a delicious gasp from him.

Chuckling, Eddie pushed Richie back a little, trying to guide him out of the kitchen before things got out of hand. "Whatever." Unable to watch him pout, he rolled his eyes, stating the obvious, "Yes, I love you."

"Most ardently," he said, in a perfect imitation of Matthew Macfadyen's velvety Darcy, and Eddie's knees wobbled. Richie took that as an open invitation to catch him off-guard. He snaked his strong hand around the side of his neck and kissed him, guiding him back until they crashed against the surface. He trailed his hands down Eddie's side to cup his ass, gently lifting him up.

Breathless, Eddie pulled back to reprimand him. "Not on the-" Richie undid the button on Eddie's jeans and traced his hand along his length and kissed him, interrupting his train of thought. "Fucking," Eddie hissed, pulling their lips apart and sliding forward and wrapping his legs around him. "Counter!" He braced himself on Richie's shoulders, preparing to be whisked off.

Raising one eyebrow suggestively, he leaned in and kissed at Eddie's jaw again. "Where better than The Fucking Counter?" Richie asked, leaning into the particular word choice.

"The Fucking Bed?" Eddie suggested, keeping the inflection the same.

Richie shook his head, messy curls bobbing as he did. Eddie pushed them out of his face. "Too far," he said, trailing sloppy kisses down his bare chest.

Thinking for a moment, if the bed was too far, so was the shower. Table, no they ate there, too. "Couch, then," he suggested, tugging a little at Richie's hair.

Making a throaty nuh-uh type noise, Richie pressed against Eddie, focusing his fingers on the waistband of Eddie's briefs. "Right here." He slid his palm beneath the fabric and started making a wordless argument for his case.

"Richie, I-" Eddie stammered, protest dissolving into a hum deep into his throat. "I'm serious," he said, halfheartedly, closing his eyes and lolling his head back, enjoying the spontaneity of the moment.

Grinning wickedly, Richie continued his movements, but brought his free hand up to Eddie's neck, gently forcing him to look at him. "So am I," he said, voice deep with lust. "I want you right here," he said, closing the distance between them with a kiss.

Eddie moaned against his mouth as he draped his arms over Richie's broad shoulders, fingertips teasing his back. "Fine," he panted, "God, whatever you want, just don't stop." He brought his mouth crashing back to Richie's, forcing his lips open and deepening the kiss. He balled Richie's t-shirt in his fist and tugged it off over his head, tossing it aside and kissing his chest. "You're cleaning it up," he

warned.

Pleased with himself, Richie simply said, "Whatever makes you happy, babe," then continued on to the stuff he knew really, really, made Eddie happy.

Things hadn't always been fighting as foreplay for the pair, though. When they were kids, as much as they needled each other, sometimes, a real fight would occur between them. Usually, it was out of a place of concern, neither boy knowing what to do with their emerging emotions.

Eddie, Bill, and Stanley had all descended on Casa del Tozier the first night of Christmas break of 1988. When they got there, they found the house dark, but the front door unlocked. Eddie frowned at Stan and Bill. They knew too well what that meant. Richie was home alone. Again.

Bill and Stan set off to gather all the movies they could find while Richie and Eddie headed off to the kitchen to make some dinner. They joked a little, but Eddie watched in awe as Richie wandered around anything but aimlessly. He brought water to a boil and defrosted hot dogs in the microwave while the frying pan heated up. Folding his arms and propping his chin on them at the edge of the sink, he looked up at Richie's hyperfocus. "Where are they this weekend?" he asked.

"Convention in Florida," he shrugged. At least, that's what they told him. Richie wasn't so sure that everything they told him wasn't just a load of bullshit. "She's probably drunk by the pool and he's fucking his secretary in their room." Poking at the water with a wooden spoon, willing it to boil faster, he sighed. He knew he could tell Eddie anything, and he had to admit that he was pretty annoyed that it happened again. For the third year in a row. "And it's not just this weekend. They won't be home until after New Years," he said sadly as he slid the hot dogs into the pan.

"Jesus, Richie," he said, standing up and turning to face him. It was the 23rd of December. After New Years was almost two weeks away. Eddie tried not to let his shock be too obvious. He knew the Toziers left Richie home a lot, but he'd never realized they'd just disappear.

Unfazed, Richie merely nodded. "Grab the milk for me, wouldja?" he asked, dumping the noodles into the pot.

"Yes, chef," Eddie said, moving to the fridge. He stared at its contents for a moment and felt his heart break a little more. There was not two weeks worth of food there. He could only hope they'd left Richie money to go get more, or order pizza, or something.

He laughed at the exaggeration. "It's just Mac and Cheese and Hot Dogs, Eds." It was really not that big of a deal. He should really get a load of me making meatloaf, he thought to himself.

But it was that big of a deal to Eddie, who responded: "Yeah, meanwhile my mom doesn't even let me touch the stove."

Richie knew that that was the truth. As far as parentage went, Mrs. Kaspbrak was as far to the polar opposite of Mrs. Tozier as she could be. Still, he didn't envy his best friend's situation for a second. "You learn quick as a latchkey kid. If you want to eat, you do it yourself," he mused, catching a frown on Eddie's face. He hated that. "Here, why don't you turn the weiners, weenie," he teased, pinching at his friend's face with a pair of tongs.

Eddie scrunched up his face and snatched the pinchers out of his hand. He stood with his arm pressed against Richie's, nudging him. "It's almost like this is just your house," he thought out loud. He rolled each of the hotdogs over to the opposite side then looked up at Richie, who nodded approvingly. "You need someone to take care of you." Derry may have been a small town, and they may not have had much experience with the extent, but weird things happened there all the time. He didn't like the idea of his best friend being alone so much.

"I'm doing pretty fine on my own," Richie groaned, moving around Eddie to drain the water at the sink carefully, struggling not to splash it given the weight. Desperately, he wished for the whole topic to be dropped since he just wanted to have fun with his friends. This was decidedly not fun.

He wasn't convinced. "Are you?" he asked, trying not to sound as concerned as he truly was.

"I'm cooking for you guys, aren't I?" he snapped, putting the pan back on the stove with a clatter. "The house is still standing, isn't it?" He gestured at the ceiling, then splashed ingredients into the pan haphazardly, tearing the two envelopes full of cheese powder almost in half in his anger. "I'm alive, with no thanks to anyone else," he added, returning to stirring the pot and pointedly not looking at Eddie beside him. Or at least pointedly making it seem like he wasn't looking at him which would have worked better if he couldn't practically feel the brown puppy dog eyes burning holes in the side of his face. "And I don't need you looking at me like that when I haven't done anything to deserve it." He slammed the lid on the macaroni and turned his back in a huff, leaning against the handle of the stove with his arms folded across his chest. He focused on his feet because he didn't want to look anywhere else. He could feel the heat building in his cheeks and he didn't want to say something he would regret.

Eddie's eyes went wide. He couldn't remember ever seeing him so mad. "Richie, I just meant-"

"You're not my mother, alright?" he said, voice rising in pitch with every passing moment. "And you're not my husband, Eddie." His word choice shocked the both of them, which only pissed Richie off more. "Just drop it!"

Throwing his hands up in surrender, Eddie backed away a little, still considering him carefully. "Alright, jeez."

The boys stayed quiet for the remainder of their time in the kitchen, lost in their own thoughts. The tension between them felt thick and heavy and they both hated it. They argued all the time, but this was different. Neither one of them were ever actually mad. Eddie felt a knot form deep in his belly and a lump grow in his throat. Yeah, he really fucking hated this. Instead of focusing on how much he hated it, he focused his energy on how much he hated Them.

After a couple of minutes, Richie called out to the living room. "Food's ready. Get it while it's hot." As he headed around the corner with his plate, he switched back to his normal Trashmouth act. "Even though it should have some sort of magical power to stay scalding since the one who made it is on fi-yah!" He flopped back into the corner of the couch.

"Somebody get the extinguisher," Stanley groaned, getting up alongside Bill to get their own food.

Piping up as he entered the room, Eddie answered, "I have some water," not really sure what he was volunteering it for.

Stan beamed. "That'll do!" He took the glass from him and dumped it clean over Richie's head. The boy yelped, sitting up. Eddie offered him a bunch of paper towels with a half-smile, trying not to think that he might have deserved that... at least a little. Still, he sank back onto the opposite end of the couch, dejected, and kicked at Richie's already too long legs, making room for his own.

"Asshole," he cursed, to all concerned parties. "Eddie's mother's the only one allowed to get me this wet."

"B-B-B-Beep beep, Richie," came Bill's voice from the kitchen, muffled by the running of the faucet.

Eddie simply shook his head, shooting back, "At least someone's giving him some." He nudged at the inside of his ankle with his toe, pouting. "Maybe he won't build up calluses on his hand anymore."

"Ya never know, frequency of any motion'll do it," he snapped back, landing a kick dangerously close to his groin in a warning. Richie focused all of his attention back on chewing his hot dog.

Eddie kept pushing all the buttons he could, mentally screaming 'talk to me, dickwad'. "It's a wonder you don't have them on your lips, then," he jabbed, eyes flitting to them.

"You'd know all about that, right?" he said, sticking his foot under Eddie and poking at him with his pointy toenails.

Stan rolled his eyes as he came back into the room. "Jesus, guys." He didn't know when the incessant bickering between the two had started, but he just wished they'd figure out whatever was causing it.

Their arguing died down as they fell into movie after movie. By the time Billy climbs in the window of the Y after Mogwai, they'd both turned around and Richie had his head laying on Eddie's shoulder. All is calm...bright light, bright light, bright light or some shit, he thinks.

Eddie's mind is somewhere else entirely and, for possibly the first time, he did something he scarcely did. He apologized. "I'm sorry about earlier," he whispered, reaching up and poking Richie's cheek to make sure he was listening. "I know you do fine on your own. I just meant..." he sighed, focusing on a pulled stitch, "it sucks that you have to." He gave Richie a little shove so they were nose to nose. He studied his face carefully, finding himself struggling not to get distracted (by Richie's mouth- what the fuck?) "I worry about you," he said, swallowing dry.

"It's fine," he answered, resting his head against his own shoulder and closing his eyes for a moment. Then, in a shocking turn of events, Richie apologized, too. "I'm sorry I snapped," he whispered. "Still my Edward Spaghedward?" he asked, kissing the boy on the tip of his nose, which he wrinkled and wiped in response. "I'll take that as a yes," he laughed and mussed Eddie's still neatly coiffed hair.

From the floor below them, Stan rolled over dramatically onto his back, groaning. "Thank God. Go to sleep, you two," he said, not bothering to open his eyes since they'd woken up. He had every intention of going back to sleep.

"There's still a movie on, dipshit," Richie said, rolling him onto his side so he could see the screen and smacking his ass.

Bill propped himself up onto his elbows and groaned, dropping his head back. "Then, sh-sh-sh-shut up so we can watch it," he said finally, turning the volume up a click or two.

Silently, Eddie considered Richie for a minute. He couldn't put his finger on what it was about him that made him want to both protect the idiot at all costs and shove him out of a third-story window; what made his heartbeat quicken when he saw him.

Richie was working through something similar, starting with what happened that night. Eddie had shown that he cared and he flipped. Why? Obviously his best friend should be able to express some sort of concern for him upon finding out that he was alone more often than not. It wasn't that he didn't want Eddie to worry, but he... didn't want him to worry. He tried to focus on the movie but his mind wouldn't let him. He was too close to Eddie for that, he realized with his face

heating up. But why? Why was he blushing like this? It wasn't like he had a crush on him or something.

Oh.

He stole a glance at Eddie and his stomach did the same little flip it had always done. Yep. That was what it was. That explained why his brain had supplied 'husband' earlier when they fought. He had a crush on him.

Of course, he did.

And then the panic set in. Why did that feel so natural? So normal? Eddie was a boy. Eddie was his best friend. And a boy. And that was wrong. Very wrong, if the way his father talked about his uncle Jack and his friend Scott was any indication. But the more he thought about it, laying next to him, it felt very "Coulda had a V8." All along. Duh, coulda had an Eddie. But no. No, he couldn't.

Before he knew it, his friends had all fallen asleep, the tracking on the VHS clicked to the end. He turned off the TV and went to get a couple of more blankets and pillows from the hall closet because, fuck, it had gotten cold. He covered Bill and Stan, putting a pillow near to each of their faces, knowing they'd migrate to it like they always did. Then, making his way back to the couch, he lifted Eddie's head gently and put the pillow under because his best friend could sleep through an alien invasion. Returning to the couch himself, he slid in the opposite way he had been and used the armrest as a pillow, then draped the blanket over himself and Eddie. As he drifted off to sleep, he had a gentle smile on his face. He didn't need anything else for Christmas. This was as good as he could imagine it being.

Still, as they got older, especially once they were on their own, they had their share of fights. Most of them were stupid and small and, in the grand scheme of things, inconsequential. They did, however, have one that threatened to knock their feet right out from under them.

The front door to their apartment swung open and Richie bounded inside, calling out into the empty living room. "I got the part!" He entered their bedroom to Eddie running out of the bathroom,

hurriedly peeling the bright purple elbow-length gloves off of his hands and flinging them over his shoulder into the tub.

Skidding to a stop on their woven throw rug, Eddie's brown eyes were wide with shock. "You got the part?" he asked, excitedly. He'd heard him, he believed him, he'd known he would, but he needed him to repeat it one more time to make sure.

He'd been stressing for a month over an audition they'd called him back ten times for, the last three being chemistry tests that he felt really good about. Still, he was tall and gawky and never knew what to do with his hands and he'd never acted on camera before and god, what if they thought he was a loser. The word rang strangely in his head when he said it like it should have been held differently on his tongue. Loser. With a capital L. Whatever that meant. Still, they picked him. Out of hundreds of other comedic actors they'd seen, they picked Richie fucking Tozier. "I got the part!" he said, punching the air victoriously with every word.

"You got the part!" he yelled, leaping into his boyfriend's outstretched arms and wrapping his legs around his waist.

Arms encircling Eddie, Richie spun them around in circles laughing "I got the part!" before tossing them both down sideways onto their bed with a bounce. He leaned forward and kissed his boyfriend happily.

Eddie pressed his palms to Richie's chest, taking fistfuls of his shirt to pull him closer. "Oh my god! That's amazing, Richie! When does it start?" he asked, eyes flitting over his super hot, super successful, working actor boyfriend.

"That's the thing," he answered and propped himself up onto his elbow, smile changing into something bittersweet that Eddie missed. "It starts shooting in the Bay Area next week."

Eddie's mouth dropped open. So, he had a lot to do in a short period of time, fittings, lines, all of that. He couldn't figure out why he looked like that was a bad thing. "That's so soon! I'm so happy for-"

"But the LA shoots start the week after," he said, lowering the boom. He took a deep breath, trying to keep his smile in tact. Truthfully,

Richie was terrified of what Eddie's reaction would be.

"LA shoots," Eddie breathed. "That's..." Far. A shock. Expected. Unfair. Out of the question. What? Speak, Eddie, he chided himself. Normally, he yapped more than a Pomeranian who'd gotten into a bag of cocaine cut with sugar. Now, when he needed it, his mouth wouldn't move. The silence in their bedroom was deafening. "LA, huh?" he asked lamely.

Nodding slowly, Richie watched Eddie carefully. "Yeah. Farther than we thought, but I was thinking," he added quickly, taking his hand between his own and staring at it, unwilling to let himself look at Eddie if he said no, "maybe you could come with."

Eddie balked. "Come with you? To LA?" He didn't mean to laugh. This wasn't funny. He had no problem laughing if he was laughing with Richie, but this... this was a sick, depraved joke that just couldn't be true. "Richie, my job is here. Our life is here. Our home," he said, bisecting his body with his hand. "Our friends," he said. Even if they are idiots. Not idiots. Losers. Why couldn't he come up with anyone that would convince him to stay? Beth? Brad? Will? Stevie? Matt? Why couldn't he think of any of their friends' names? The only thing he could come up with was their next-door neighbor, William, the author, who was nice enough in the hall with his boyish charm, but he couldn't shake the thought that he and Richie made him nervous. He even stuttered once when they asked him to grab their mail for them when they went to Napa for a couple of days. He wasn't a friend, exactly, but he was something.

He was a part of their life that Richie wanted to, what, walk away from entirely? Why did it sometimes feel like they were on the run?

"Babe, they want to shoot the whole first season," Richie said. He stood up and started to pace. He readjusted his glasses and tried to focus on the cool wood under his feet. "It's the guys who wrote Friends. It's a sure thing." He gripped the top of their dresser and leaned forward. He hated this. He kept hearing a ghostly laugh in the back of his head that was anything but comforting. He tried to make it as small as possible. "Doesn't your firm have an office in LA you can work out of, at least for a little while?" he asked, trying desperately to convince him.

"I think so, but..." he trailed off.

Richie shrugged. "What harm could it do to ask?"

As he rolled onto his back, Eddie groaned, watching the ceiling swirl before him. "I don't know, Richie. That's..."

"A lot to digest, I know," he said, turning back to face him.

Eddie scoffed. "A lot to digest?" That was quite the understatement. "Richie, you just came home and said 'Hey, wanna move 6 hours away in the next two weeks on a whim?'"

Richie clamped his jaw shut. That wasn't fair and Eddie knew it. This wasn't a whim. Sure, they hadn't expected it, but it shouldn't have been a surprise. The sheer amount of times he'd heard his name should have been indicative enough, but the tone... Normally, Eddie saying his name was one of his favorite sounds. He'd thought he'd heard every version, but this was new. "Why do you keep saying my name like that?"

"Like what, Richie," Eddie asked, the rolling of his eyes almost audible.

"Like that!" Richie squawked, throwing his hands in the air before shoving them deep in the pockets of his jeans. "Like you'd rather be calling me 'motherfucker' than my name."

Eddie wilted, moving to his stomach and crooking his finger into Richie's belt loop, pulling him closer. "I don't mean it like that. I just..." he tugged a couple of times then let his hand rest on his thigh. "God, are you serious?" He couldn't remember a time without the big doofus in front of him and this certainly felt like... well. It felt closer than anything else.

Reaching down to smooth his boyfriend's hair, Richie softened. "Yes. Come to LA with me." Eddie pressed into his hand reflexively. "We don't have anything really holding us here, we can go wherever we want and this is huge." He choked down his instinctive urge to make a dick joke. "Eddie, come on. At least think about it?" he asked, kneeling at the foot of the bed and resting his chin on his folded

arms, eyes pleading.

"Think about it," Eddie breathed, knowing how important this was to the person who was, no contest, most important to him. "Okay," he agreed, begrudgingly, not sure what exactly he was fighting against; why the whole idea didn't sit right.

Behind his too-thick glasses, Richie's eyes seemed to grow three inches as he attempted puppy-dog eyes. "Please?" he asked again, in an attempt to ensure that Eddie would really think about it.

Groaning and pulling him up onto the bed, Eddie nodded. "Okay, Richie." He kissed him gently before going back to his cleaning.

Watching as he walked away, Richie felt a strange ache in his chest, like there was something big that was amiss. What was it about this day? It was the end of July. Most people loved Summer. But every July since they'd left... Dayton, that's where they were from, right? Or was it DeMoines? Deltona? It didn't matter. Every July, like clockwork, he and Eddie fought. Every July, it was like something was trying to tear them apart. A vision of snarling layers of teeth and red balloons flashed through Richie's mind and he tried to shake them off. All of their playful banter turned in to insatiable arguments and uncalled for jabs.

Later that night, they lay in bed watching a rerun of Will & Grace, each ignoring a redhead shaped hole in their hearts that they both felt every time they watched. As they watched Jack deal with his son's cheerleading tryouts, Eddie found himself imagining a world where Richie, his Richie, was a part of an iconic TV show like this and he blushed, realizing how much of a jerk he'd been. He turned and buried his face in Richie's neck. "How long is filming supposed to take?"

Instinctively, Richie pressed his cheek to the top of the smaller man's head. "Six months, if everything goes super well and on time," he said, recalling the tentative shooting prospectus he'd received that morning.

Eddie looked up at him sadly, imagining not spending their birthdays, Thanksgiving, Christmas, or New Years together. "I mean,

we could do the distance thing and meet in the middle on our days off, but I..." he trailed off, realizing that he couldn't remember ever spending the night in a bed that didn't have Richie in it. He wasn't even sure that he could. He was sure that he had to have done so at some point, but probably not in... 15 years, his brain supplied from nowhere, "we have this weird co-dependent thing and I just..." Something about being away from you doesn't sit right with me. Like, something's gonna go wrong." He felt his chest constrict and took a deep breath in, the scent of their fabric softener and Richie's cologne filling his head, but he still couldn't chase the expectation of the taste of something bitter and metallic. What was that about?

"That's your mother talking," Richie said without prompting. As soon as the words left his mouth, he couldn't understand what he'd meant by it. Puzzling it over for the briefest of moments, he was jarred back to reality by his boyfriend jolting to his feet.

"My mother?!" he squawked, voice an octave higher than was entirely typical. "What the fuck is that supposed to mean, asshole?" he asked, slicing at the air in front of his chest with his hands.

He hadn't been ready for Round 2. Richie buried his face in his hands and whined a low "Ffffuck." He replaced his glasses, then looked at his boyfriend, suddenly exhausted.

"I don't know, Eds. You tell me since you're so wound the fuck up about it."

Eddie's eyes widened. "You don't get it, do you?" he asked, grabbing his light grey hoodie from the chair in the corner of the room. "My entire life has revolved around you for who the fuck knows how long." He zipped up the garment and left the room, in search of his shoes. "I don't even remember what my life was like before you." Hearing that Richie had, indeed, followed him out into the living room, he whipped back, folding his arms over his chest defensively. "Just this once, think about how something affects me."

"Think about..." Richie balked, moving to rest his shoulder on the wall by the kitchen. "Come on. This is something super important to me. Don't you get that?" he asked pointedly. "This could be my shot." He said, eyes brimming with tears. He'd expected a discussion; He'd expected hesitation; All in all, though, he'd expected the love of his

life to be supportive of something so important. "This is huge," he reiterated.

"If you cared about anything BUT you, we wouldn't be having this argument," Eddie snapped, swinging the front door to their apartment open and shut.

Richie was left dumbfounded. Something in him felt like screaming that this wasn't real. Whatever it was that was screaming inside of him sounded like Eddie. Eddie, but younger. He tried to push the voice from his head and groaned, heading out into the hallway. "That's real mature, Eddie." He turned toward the elevator at the end of the hall, then back toward the stairs. "Eddie?" Nothing. He was gone. "Fuck!" he yelled, pounding his fist against the wall. Their next-door neighbor stuck his head out his own front door, breathless and slightly panicked. "The fuck are you looking at?" he asked.

"N-n-n-nothing. J-just thought..."

Richie turned to look at the guy, possibly for the first time since he'd moved in a couple of years back. He instinctively wanted to go to him for comfort but decided that was fucking dumb. He shook his head and went back inside.

The TV in Eddie's hotel room droned on with some movie he remembered seeing before as he lay in bed, not really watching it. "Mommy and Daddy are home!" Greg Kinnear said, greeting his Brussels Griffon with a grumpy Jack Nicholson in tow. When the older man seemed to smart at the allusion to a relationship with the gay artist, whose cast on his left arm was drudging up something from his memory, but he couldn't figure out what, he laughed. "Sorry. You're just fun to mess with."

Absently, he felt himself settle back into the deep sadness that brought him to the hotel a couple of hours earlier. "I used to mess with someone like that. What was his name?" Eddie stared at his hand for a minute, the word lover bouncing around his head like the neon pipes on his office screensaver. "God, Richie. Fuck," he hissed, feeling the air get sucked out of him, scared shitless that he'd just had a stroke or something. How could he forget Richie? "Am I that pissed off that I'd forget my boyfriend's name?" He shook his head and

turned the light out, leaving the TV to rattle on to keep him company. Fuck, he really couldn't sleep alone, could he?

The tail end of Pretty in Pink played off of the TV in their bedroom, though he wasn't even sure there was a they any more. Richie's voice echoed in his own head, high pitched and frantic, "I'm sorry- Who invited Molly Ringwald into the group?" He couldn't place the reason, but that had to have something to do with the tears streaming down his face. Except, not. "What the fuck? Why am I crying?" No, not the voice in his head. The song. It was the song. A dance in the rain in front of an old fashioned movie theatre. A boy he couldn't quite remember. "God, this stupid song shouldn't do things to me." When the movie's credits finally drew to a close, the next commercial knocked everything back into place. "Uh-Oh, SpaghettiOs," it concluded and Richie choked out a hoarse sob. Okay, he needed Eddie to call him right fucking now. He needed to know he was okay. He needed to see his bright blue eyes... Green eyes? Fuck, what color were they? Yeah, he needed his SpaghEddie home right now.

Eddie walked through the dark, dank sewer. Somewhere ahead of him, he could distantly hear a scream. "You're a sloppy bitch!" Richie yelled.

"Richie!" He sped off toward the noise, chasing the sound to a huge open cavern.

"Yeah, that's right! You wanna dance? Yippee ki-yay, motherfu-"

Hovering over top of Richie was the leper he'd battled... fuck, he couldn't remember when, but he knew he had dealt with it before. No, no, it wasn't the leper. The skin was still intact but marred. Bright red, purplish lesions covered his pale, sallow skin. Richie remained unaware and unconscious. "No, don't!" He yelled. The diminutive vision turned back to him, sneering, then focused back on Richie. "Richie!" He mustered up his courage and flung himself down out of the tunnel toward the pair. "Don't touch him!" he screamed, reaching down and picking up a rock to throw at him. "Richie!"

He woke with a start, sweat-dampened clothes clinging to his panting frame. "Richie!" He looked around the room. The hotel room. "What the fuck?" he asked, trying to pinpoint the low voices. The alarm

clock on the dresser blinked 7:29 am. The TV's bright picture provided more light than the sun peeking through the windows. The TV. That was the source of the voices.

The morning news anchor in his pale grey suit with ashy blond curls reminded Eddie of someone, but it didn't much matter. His voice was all Eddie could focus on. "Memorial services for 40th President of the United States Ronald Reagan continue in Washington D.C. over a month following his passing due to complications regarding his 10 year battle with Alzheimer's Disease. His legacy includes..."

"The deaths of over a half a million people in the US, and like half of them gay men. The motherfucker," he supplied, talking over whatever idle platitudes the man was going to spew. He called out to the bathroom. "Hey, Richie, did you see?"

No. No, of course, he didn't see. Richie wasn't there. Richie was home, alone, and probably worried sick.

"Fuck," Eddie thought, "Fuck. I gotta get home." He grabbed his car keys off of the nightstand and slipped his shoes back on, tying his hoodie around his waist, darting out of the room like a bat out of hell.

Eddie was lying on a step down in a cave. He was grown, but wearing that same baby blue Airwolf t-shirt and yellow color block short shorts, a fanny pack tight around his waist... Just like last time. Last time what? And why was that baby blue shirt getting darker around the middle? "What the fuck?" Richie asked the near-empty room, clamoring down and dropping to his knees beside him. He looked down and pressed his hand to the darkening spot and brought his hand back up, slick and red and... "Eddie? No, no, no," he begged, leaning down and scooping him into his arms. "Babe, hey, look at me!" He raised his hand to Eddie's cheek, trying to rouse his attention, but his fingers grazed against the artery on the side of his neck that was shockingly still. "Eddie..." he sobbed.

From above him, a high pitched voice swirled. "He stole your heart, Richie. You let everyone know your dirty little secret because you love him too much. Now, I had to steal his heart right back." The voice laughed, then suddenly, with a crunch, a giant clown face with

millions of teeth appeared at the opening to the tunnel. His heart thudded. He couldn't place it.

It.

He couldn't place It. Pennywise. The Motherfucking Dancing Clown.

"Get off of him!" He scrambled to his feet, batting at the demonic claws with a fence post. Where the fuck had that come from? "Eddie," he screamed, trying desperately to keep It away from him. Still, he fought valiantly until the metal was bent around him by the monster, dug into the walls of the cave and he struggled against it. "Eds!" he wailed, voice raw and rough.

The clown edged a sinister grin. "He's your whole world, huh, Richie?" he taunted.

"Fuck you, you moldy snot rag," he spat.

Pennywise giggled, sticking his head in the cave, hovering over Eddie menacingly. "Tell me he's your whole world," he said.

Breathlessly, Richie tried to see a way out of this without giving It that. He couldn't. There was no way he could do this without admitting how much Eddie meant to him. "He is. He is my whole world." Angry, hurt tears began to stream down his face as he writhed against the metal pole. "Give him back. Give..."

"I am the Eater of Worlds, Richie," the supernatural being reminded, opening his mouth wide and slowly moving over Eddie. But Richie was still in their bed, blanket so tight around his arms it was nearly tied.

Eddie crept into the apartment to definite sounds of a struggle. His heart raced and he rushed to the door, afraid of what he might find.

"Give him back," Richie shouted, "He's my whole world." Eddie crossed to the bed and started digging the blanket out from around him. When he finally freed him from the covers, he had to quickly dodge a swing that was clearly not meant for him. "Fuck you! Let him go!" he cried, and Eddie calmly crawled across the bed, grabbing his wrists before straddling him. He leaned down so that their chests

were flush together, and brought his boyfriend's hands up to rest on his back. "Eddie!" Richie called out again, voice strained and tearful. Eddie didn't want to think about what Richie must have been seeing. Instead, he simply rocked back and forth a little, shushing him sweetly. The movement must have disrupted his sleep because he only had to move maybe twice before Richie's eyes were fluttering opening. "Eddie?" He gasped, reaching helplessly onto the nightstand for his glasses. When he could finally see that this was, indeed, the real live Eddie Kaspbrak lying on top of him, he simply sighed out a choked "Eds," before breaking down into desperate sobs, fists dug into the back of his boyfriend's hoodie.

"Richie," Eddie soothed, kissing him once before pressing their cheeks together. "It's alright. I'm here." He rested back on his heels and pulled Richie up to meet him, holding him tighter than either would have believed. "I've got you." When his boyfriend didn't seem to settle at that, he opted simply to repeat it over and over until they both calmed a little. "I've got you." Eddie wiped away a still-too-steady stream of tears from Richie's eyes, then kissed him gently. "I'm here."

Richie shook his head, everything from last night flooding back to him. "You're not your mother," he said, pulling back to look him in the eyes. Brown. Dark, chestnut brown.

Nodding, Eddie seemed to be having the same barrage of words. "I know you care about things. About us."

"God, I'm sorry, Eddie," he said, pressing his face against the crook of his neck. "Eddie," he repeated, soft, like a prayer; a reminder of what he could have lost. "I love you."

"I'm sorry," Eddie corrected, shouldering the blame entirely upon himself. "I'm so sorry," he repeated, trailing kisses from his mouth to his neck and back again. "I'm an asshole." One of the accusations from their fight rattled through his brain and gave him pause. That's your mother talking. That had been the tipping point, hadn't it? But the thing was, he admitted, "I can't even remember my mother." He stopped his battery of kisses for a moment, and rested back for a beat, considering what he said. He didn't. He couldn't remember his mother at all. "I don't know why I was so hurt when you said it," he admitted, ashamed.

Considering it for a moment, Richie leaned back against the headboard, stunned. "I don't either," he said, suddenly a little more than concerned with their collective mental health, "Remember," he added quickly, making sure he knew he wasn't saying that he didn't know why he was so hurt. He studied his boyfriend's face, kicking himself for his momentary traumatic lapse in memory the night before. "What I do remember is you," he assured, taking each of Eddie's hands and kissing them.

He leaned forward, curling up into Richie's lap, cradling himself tightly against him, finding comfort in his arms. "But you didn't for a minute last night, did you?" he asked, unable to bring himself to look up at him, but the stunned silence spoke volumes. "Neither did I." Eddie snaked his arms up around Richie's neck and found himself wondering if he could get drunk off of someone's smell. If he could, it was clear that, to him, Richie would be the most intoxicating of substances. "Please, don't leave me," he said, voice a little more pathetic and thin than he'd have hoped.

"I'm not going anywhere, babe," Richie said, the low timbre of his still sleepy voice calming Eddie's frayed nerves.

Still, he felt the need to correct him. "You're going to LA."

Richie shook his head. "Not without you." That much should have been painfully obvious. He wasn't going anywhere that Eddie wasn't. If that meant that he was never going to leave this bed, so fucking be it. Such a heavenly way to die and all, right?

Hands wandering to Richie's cheek, Eddie adjusted his angle so that he could see his boyfriend more clearly. "I'll go wherever you need me to go, Richie. LA is fine as long as I have you," he stared at him, gently thumbing against the five o'clock shadow that went ignored last night and was now full-on stubble. "I go where you go. I swear. I'll support you 1000 percent." He pressed another kiss to Richie's lips and sighed, resting his forehead against him. "I was just..." He didn't know who the Eddie was that had come over him last night, but he'd really appreciate it if he never made another appearance. "I don't know. I was scared. But I'm not now." He pulled the covers up around them and proceeded to close his eyes, held closely to Richie's chest and seated in his lap. It was still early enough that neither of them

had to be up for quite a while yet, so he had every intention of trying to sleep off the night. "I'm with you," he said, half as an affirmation to Richie, half as a reminder to himself. He was safe in their bed in Richie's arms and fuck whatever planet's alignment turned him into Mr. Hyde last night. "I love you." Leaned up and kissed Richie, slow and languid, once again. "I love you so fucking much." He dozed off almost immediately, and Richie smiled, not far behind.

Yeah. There was no way they were going to be sleeping separately again ever.

When they woke up a couple of hours later, they went to the kitchen together and ate a late breakfast, Richie insisting that he cook something when Eddie let slip that he'd only eaten from a vending machine the night before. "What the fuck happened to us last night?" he asked, shaking his head as he slid a plate with a cheese omelet across the table to Eddie, sitting down in the seat next to him at the small round table with his own scrambled eggs and placing a bowl of mixed berries between them.

"Let's go with a psychosomatic threat," Eddie suggested lamely, taking a big bite of his eggs.

"Our brains collectively decided to fuck with us to scare some sense into me." He shrugged so flippantly that Richie couldn't help but laugh.

Getting back up to grab the ketchup from the fridge, he called over his shoulder, "That doesn't happen."

Watching Richie defile his eggs with the red slop, Eddie wrinkled his nose a little. He focused back on his own plate, choosing to believe his own lie, because it was easier than accepting anything else. "Yes, it does," he said, popping another mouthful of his breakfast into his mouth, quickly adding, "And, no, I don't know how I know, but I just know," before Richie could interrupt him.

"How?" he still managed to ask.

Pinching the bridge of his nose with his free hand, Eddie groaned a little. "I don't know, Richie," he put his hand over his boyfriend's and

offered a sad smile. "Here's what I do know. I love you," Richie smiled back, lacing his fingers into Eddie's. "I love you and I'm staying with you," he said, pressing a kiss to the back of Richie's hand then leaving them joined on the table.

Richie ran his thumb over Eddie's. He watched him silently for a minute, relieved that everything from the night before was over. Still, he couldn't shake the gross, exhausted, shaky feeling that had followed him since he stormed off. "You scared the shit out of me when you left, you know that, right?"

"I know," he said. He'd never meant that. He just couldn't... He didn't know. He didn't know why he'd left. A high pitched laugh had filled his ears and he'd lost the ability to think. He just ran. He ran before Richie had the chance to. He pulled him close and kissed him before apologizing over and over. "I'm sorry. I'm so sorry."

He took a deep breath, and closed his eyes, trying to capture the last time he'd been that scared. There had to have been a moment. He could feel it. A movie projector and a ramshackle old house. A dead girl floating. But he couldn't voice any of it. "I haven't felt that way since..." A hammock. Bikes. Sewers. Paul Bunyan. Shared Ice Cream Cones. Fleeting images fell through his mind and petered out. It was like trying to catch smoke in a butterfly net. "I don't know why my brain filled in dairy?" He shook his head, trying to figure out what he meant by that. Not dairy. What the fuck? "I haven't felt that way since dairy? What does that even mean?" He took one of the strawberries from the bowl and bit into it, releasing juice down his chin as he spoke.

Eddie laughed a little, ruffling Richie's hair uselessly. "You're a mess," he chided.

"I'm your mess," Richie said, smile dyed pink.

Leaning in and swiping the juice away from his lip and kissing him. "Don't fucking forget it, mister," he said, pulling back for a moment before smiling as he returned to the sweetest kiss they'd shared all morning.

By dinner, they'd forgotten that they even fought.

Thursdays were Eddie's least favorite day of the week. They ran errands together and bickered and, ultimately, it was nice to spend a large chunk of time together, but he'd have preferred to just spend the day with his fiancée.

After their dinner not-argument the night before, Richie had gotten the glint of mischief back in his eye. Unbeknownst to Eddie, it was all a part of his plan. As they lay in bed late that night, Eddie sleeping soundly against his side, face buried in the crook of his neck, Richie's phone lit up in his hand.

Bevvie 12:47 a.m. - I have thick socks with me if you need them :)

M fine bev no cold feet here my hot husband to be had his feet wrapped around mine rn so no need.

Big Bill 12:50 a.m. - You into foot play, trashmouth?

If theyre eddies lol

Big Bill 12:51 a.m. - Gross.

Mikey 12:55 a.m. - what time do you need us?

thank u mikey ur the better best man. our appt is 12 so like quarter til and ill leave the clothes on the bed for you guys to swing by and grab before

Bevvie 12:57 a.m. - Scuse you. I'm the best best man don't forget to leave your shirt and jacket out too

Mikey 12:57 a.m. - YOU WANT ME TO GET YOUR FUSSY HUSBAND READY AND BACK TO YOU IN FIFTEEN MINUTES.

hes not fussy hes particular and an hour and fifteen quarter til ~ElEvEn~ also bev youre my maid of honor not my best man

Ben 1:03 a.m. - then you'd better get some beauty sleep BRIDE TO BE

Big Bill 1:05 a.m. - There's not enough time for that

suck it denbrough

Mikey 1:07 a.m. - too busy with mine. we'll leave your micropenis for Eddie tyvm.

ouch (1) attachment

Big Bill 1:10 a.m. - What the fuck, Rich?

Mikey 1:10 a.m. - Eh.

Bevvie 1:10 a.m. - Ooo baby

Ben 1:10 a.m. - man i miss not remembering you all

Bevvie 1:11 a.m. - liar.

see you guys tomorrow

Richie smiled and put his phone down. A surprise wedding was certainly unorthodox but, then again, their whole lives had been unorthodox. Why should their wedding be any different?

The next morning, while Eddie was in the shower, Richie's phone buzzed twice. Opening the messages, he laughed.

Stan The Man 7:15 a.m. - MY EYES!

Stan The Man 7:15 a.m. - This is what I wake up to?

wanted to make sure you started your day off right with a little vitamin D ;P

He laughed and put his phone down.

In the shower, Eddie looked down at the notification on his watch.

Stan 7:16 a.m. - Mazel Tov

Hm?

Stan 7:33 a.m. - Nevermind.

Eddie shrugged and turned the water off, moving into the bedroom to get dressed.

Richie was so distracted by his naked really-fucking-soon-to-be-husband that he almost missed Stan's text.

Stan The Man 7:33 a.m. - shitshitshitshit I'm sorry.

what's up staniel

Stan The Man 7:36 a.m. - Nothing. Check Eddie's phone.

idiot lol hes fine he has no idea pretty sure he'd have said something by now if you'd blown it.

As they walked from their usual coffee place back up past City Hall hand in hand around twenty til eleven, Richie looked up and pointed.

"Marry me," he said with a smile.

Eddie didn't even pause and was steps ahead of Richie when he felt himself yanked backward. He stared at Richie, then down to his engagement ring, then back to his fiancé, "What?" Had one of them bumped their heads? Were they losing their memories again? His heart thumped nervously in his chest.

"Marry me," he repeated. He dug in his heels as Eddie tried to pull him on.

"That doesn't even register on the distraction scale anymore," he laughed. Richie had proposed to him at least once a week since he had done it for real. After the flashmob at the doctor's office, there was nothing more that could be done to throw him off. "You're still sleeping on the couch until you clean up the counter from last night," he laughed, knowing better than anyone that the only reason he'd be on the couch was if Eddie was asleep on top of him

"Marry me," he said again, smiling eyes brimming with tears beneath his glasses

He put his hands on his fiance's shoulders and groaned, unable to handle the goofy happy when they had some appointment at noon that he wouldn't tell him about that was weighing heavy on the panic part of his brain. "Richie," he sighed, "I said yes to you six months ago. We have the marriage license."

Richie pointed up at the building and did an over the top game show girl arm gesturing to the sign: City Hall. "Eds. Marry me."

He blinked at the words and Richie could just about see it falling into place. "We don't have a witness," he shook his head.

"Can I get a witness?!" Richie yelled in the most Motown-y voice he could muster.

Eddie laughed, kissing him suddenly to silence the yelling. "Alright, Marvin Very-Fucking-Gay," he hissed, laughing as he pressed a hand over his mouth. "It doesn't work like that. I don't have..." his mind ran wild, trying to come up with the things they had discussed but couldn't come up with a single thing stopping them, "anything we talked about having." He'd hardly heard the door to city hall swung open before he was lifted off the ground by arms linked through his own. When his captors laughed, he calmed. He'd know those laughs anywhere. "Bill? Mike? What are you..."

"You didn't think he expected you to get married like this, did you?" Mike asked, swinging the garment bag that was hanging from Bill's finger. "Come on." He let Eddie down and the men snaked their arms around his back, pushing him down the block.

"See, it does work like that! Can I get a Maid of Honor?" Eddie looked over his shoulder as he was being willingly kidnapped by two of his best friends, to see the other three flanking Richie, Stan on one side, Bev and Ben on the other. "Worked again! See you soon, babe!" Richie called back, smiling broadly at him, bouncing on his toes a little.

Holy shit.

Richie Tozier was marrying Eddie Kaspbrak.

A little while later, standing in the mirror of the locker room of the New York Sports Club Richie and Eddie had joined a few months earlier, staring at his reflection in his favorite grey suit with a brand new cobalt blue necktie, done up in an Eldredge knot. He was getting married. Mike and Bill sat on the bench behind him, hands entwined, smiling fondly at each other, then back at Eddie. Mike stood, picking

a piece of lint off of his Eddie's suit jacket and leaving his hands on his shoulders.

Having been exceptionally quiet since they'd pulled him off to get changed, Eddie finally broke his silence. "What the fuck?" he said, bewildered, as he turned to face them. He couldn't wrap his mind around what was going on. "How did you..." he trailed off, then gestured vaguely with his hands in their direction.

"Use your words, man," Bill coached, laying back on the bench.

Eddie nodded, swallowing a deep breath to regain his composure. "Is this actually happening?" He looked up at Mike, half expecting him to loose a high pitched laugh and tell him no; that he had died in Derry and this was all an elaborate last vision created by It to torture him before he actually went into the light.

When he did laugh, it was warm and friendly and 100% Mike. "Yes. We dragged you into the gym to get you dressed for your wedding," he said, grabbing the hairspray from the bench and giving another spritz to the top of Eddie's head, affixing a disheveled strand where it belonged. "Richie's had this planned for a while."

Planned? Richie? That didn't compute. Wasn't that what they'd argued about last night? That Richie left the planning to Eddie. "A surprise wedding?" he said, glancing between the two men in front of him. His best men, he supposed.

"Yeah," Mike smiled, stepping back to appraise him and nodded. Not bad for a rush job. Richie had definitely picked the right suit, though. Of course, he did. "He saw how much the wedding planning was stressing you out and it doesn't have to be that way." He gave a half-smile and, when Bill stood up, snaking his arms around Mike's middle. Mike patted his cheek and laced his hands together with his boyfriend's, a silent reminder that love didn't have to be anything but whatever the concerned parties wanted it to be. Richie wanted Eddie. If Eddie didn't want a showy, white wedding, that was all he needed to hear on the subject.

"But..." he started, meaning to list the plans they'd been working on.

"You told him you didn't want a big wedding, didn't you?" Bill prompted, standing into the curve of Mike's arm, expression reading 'Duh' as much as any he'd used when they were young enough to have gotten away with adding it to the response.

Eddie scoffed, "Oh my god. Years ago," he said, recalling the afternoon he and Richie had spent scrolling through facebook, inundated by wedding pictures from two late-night comedians who'd gotten married within weeks of one another. Having worked with them both, he shared anecdotes about the wedding preparations and the way it seemed like one of them may actually hate his wife, by the way he talked about her, saying something about the befuddling nature of straight men. Eddie had laughed but made an offhand joke about how much he hated big weddings and was glad they were gay and not likely to give in to all of that. "He remembers that?" he asked, a little thrown off. It had just been a flippant comment.

"The Derry Effect doesn't count for the stuff we did in the interim," Mike said with a shrug.

Eddie laughed. "I don't expect him to listen to a lot of what I say, or at least to retain it," he said. That wasn't necessarily fair or true, he knew, but Mike knew what he meant. Richie was once again, since leaving Derry, a human hurricane.

"It's you. He retains it all," Bill said, slapping Eddie's cheek fondly. He looked at the man in front of him and shook his head. "Somehow, the two most chaotic disasters managed to remember each other through everything." He rested his head against Mike's arm as he was squeezed even tighter. It went without saying, of course, that everyone was a little jealous of how much time they'd had. "Even if you could never take pity on your neighbors."

"Yeah, and now I'm stuck with him," he said, his smile clearly betraying how much that was never even a concern. Stuck. More like drawn to and clamped down on. He toyed with the ring on his left hand and felt his heart start to race. He was marrying Richie. In, like, minutes. Holy shit.

Mike looked down at his watch, "I mean, not yet." He offered his wrist to Bill with a shrug, jokingly adding, "Still time to run if you've

realized that you're marrying the world's biggest idiot?"

All he could do was laugh. Like that was ever an option. "He's my world and my idiot." Mike of all people should have known that.

Lips pressed into a grimace, Bill shivered out an exaggerated "Gross," before going back to gather up the toiletry items they'd brought for Eddie to make himself a little more Getting-Married-Ready than Doing-Errands-Ready.

Landing a kick to his shin, he groaned out a teasing "Asshole," with no malice meant.

On the short walk back to City Hall, Eddie dragged them into Duane Reid for one last thing. When he'd made his purchase, he turned to Bill and asked, "Do you have a pen? Can I borrow it?" He quickly began to scrawl out words on the legal pad he'd bought, new, and then folded the page and put it in next to the old R+E etching that still lived in his wallet before replacing it in his pocket next to the borrowed blue Bic.

In the men's room, just like they had when they were in junior high, Bev had perched herself on the sink in front of Richie, helping him with his tie and his beyond-help hair. "You okay, honey?" she asked casually, noticing the slightly manic glint behind his glasses.

Richie nodded, trying not to let her know just how badly his hands were trembling by shoving them in his pockets. As though on cue, she reached out and grabbed his wrists. His resolve crumbled into a ridiculous stream of thoughts. "What if he splits? What if he freaks out? What if he's pissed?" His stomach flipped nervously, and he silently thanked whatever God was out there that the only thing he puked out was words.

"Richie, breathe," the woman said, hopping down off the sink and rubbing her hands up and down his arms. "Breathe, honey. Eddie is not going to freak out," she said. With her eyes locked on his, Richie almost felt like he was trapped in the deadlights again, but this time, calmed. She had always felt a different bond with Richie than the rest of the Losers. It probably had something to do with shared trauma, but it was something more. They just got each other. "You're the one

that's a mess," she teased, dragging him out into the hallway.

He shook his head, following her anyway. "Because what if he doesn't want this? What if he wants the option to leave?" he suggested.

Bev shook her head, staring down the hallway past him. "Richie, look..."

"Sorry," he said, adjusting his glasses and staring at his feet. He was being ridiculous and he knew it. He was just so nervous about the whole thing. A good nervous. Anxious, excited; not the type of nervous he was used to.

Smiling, she glanced back to him, she clarified, "No, really," she grabbed him by the shoulders and spun him around to where the rest of the Losers, Bill and Mike, Ben, and Stan stood, hugging Eddie and laughing. "Look." Richie felt himself calm instantly. The pair of them moved to the group.

"Hi," Eddie said, looking up at him.

Richie was pretty sure that his heart had stopped beating. In that moment, he was 7 and joining Eddie on the swings after seeing him playing alone. He was 10 and Eddie was rattling off the litany of germs he could spread by giving someone a Wet Willie and still doing it anyway. He was 13 and throwing himself in front of a clown making his way out of a projector. He was 16 and holding Eddie in the back row of the dark movie theatre as they both cried when the little girl sobbed over her best friend's coffin in *My Girl*, realizing how close they'd both come to that being either one of them. He was 18 and sneaking in his window and knocking him over onto the bed and grinding against him until they both came because the 6 hours he'd been at work was too fucking long for him to be away and he was too horny to wait and do it properly. He was 22 and coming in buzzed after an open mic night to find Eddie waiting drowsily for his run-down. He was 28 and waking up from a nightmare to Eddie holding him and telling him that he wasn't going anywhere. He was 33 and winning his first People's Choice Award and staring at Eddie in the crowd, beaming back at him. He was 41 and seeing Eddie's eyes open for the first time after being dragged, comatose, from the House on Neibolt Street and unable to keep his shit together. He was

42 and marrying his best friend of 35 years. Fucking finally. "Hi," he said, voice barely audible.

He shook his head, still struggling to wrap his head around what they were going to do. "Are you ready for this?" he asked, deciding instead to wrap his arms around his REALLY-fucking-soon-to-be-husband.

"Been ready," he said. Finally registering the rest of the group's presence. "Hi, guys," he said, pressing a kiss to the top of Eddie's forehead, and greeting them over him. Holding his camera up, Stan caught the moment perfectly and showed it to Ben, beside him. That was it. Ben let out a stifled sob and the waterworks started. "Oh my God, Ben," Richie groaned, pulling their friend into the hug, too.

Pawing at his eyes, he tried to wriggle out of their arms. "Shut up. I'm just really happy for you guys," he whined.

Bev wrapped her arms around her fiancé and laughed, tugging him backward. "Alright, sweetie. Let's give them some space," she said, half to Ben, half to the other guys who were crowding the couple. "What time is your appointment?" she asked, looking at her phone for the time.

"Noon," Richie answered, then tugged him down onto the bench by the door.

One eyebrow raised slightly, Eddie looked impressed. "You made an appointment?" he said, teasing him lightly.

Richie moved his head from side to side, sarcastically tossing the idea around. "Maybe you're rubbing off on me," he said, sliding his hand up Eddie's thigh.

"You planned." He smiled, realizing for the first time that, maybe, just maybe, Richie had been egging him on the night before, trying to throw him off the trail. Not that he'd even remotely expected it, but still...

Proud of himself, Richie huffed on his fingernails and brushed them off on his lapel, earning a quiet laugh as he admitted, "I did."

"God, only took thirty years," Eddie said, rolling his eyes before

leaning in to kiss Richie. He slid his arm over his neck and wound his hand into his hair, tugging on it lightly.

"Hey," Richie objected, faux-offended, "You've been rubbing off on me the whole time," he said, eyes flicking down daringly to accent his lazy dirty joke. Eddie simply shook his head. He should have known. "So, look, we're not gonna get to do the custom vows right now, but I know you've had yours written forever," Richie said, expecting some form of protest, as that had been the one thing he'd truly had his heart set on. "I'm not spoiling anything, but we're still gonna do them, just, after..."

Eddie shook his head. "I don't even have them with me."

Adjusting his glasses nervously, Eddie shrugged. "Check your breast pocket," he prompted, then reached into his own to make sure they were still there.

"Kaspbrak, Tozier," called a voice from the doorway. The assembled Losers moved to the door to the judge's chambers expectantly.

Reaching into the pocket, Eddie was surprised to find the small envelope still sealed. "Jesus, Richie. You really thought of everything, didn't you?" He said, standing up, finding himself even more in love with him than he'd thought possible. "We're really doing this?" he asked, getting a wordless nod in response.

The voice called out again. "Kaspbrak, Tozier."

"Guys, that's you," Stan said, rolling his eyes at them. They would be so wrapped up in each other that they'd forget their own last names.

Eddie turned toward the door and pulled Richie after him. "Coming," he said, with a breathless anticipation that, years before, would have had him reaching for his inhaler. Instead, he simply took a deep breath and smiled.

"Not yet," Richie said, voice low and enticing.

Bev laughed, swatting at him from behind. "Beep beep, Richie."

"On your wedding day, dickhead?" Stan scowled, shoving them both

through the door playfully.

Richie gave a full laugh, throwing his head back. It was just like the first time.

Four boys stood in a corner of the park on the first warm Saturday of spring. They were ten and done being cooped up for a while. "I love you," Eddie said, a white sheet draped around him like a cloak. Stan stood behind him as Chewie, the height difference making it clear why Eddie always had to be Leia when they played Star Wars. Not that he minded because she was clearly the coolest Skywalker. Richie joked that it was just that he knew what it was like to be enslaved by Jabba the Hut.

But, with his hands tied with a jump rope and being manhandled by Bill backward, away from Eddie and Stan, Richie lowered his voice dramatically, stoically responding "I know."

"That's like Leia and Hans wedding vows," Stan joked, needling Eddie in the side. "You guys are practically married now." Bill doubled over in laughter, letting Richie fall over as he'd been struggling against his Stormtrooper Guard grasp.

Rolling his eyes at the interruption to his very dramatic favorite scene to play, he dusted himself off and straightened his glasses. "I'd rather be married to Eddie than either of you guys," he said, kicking Bill once in the shin.

Bill winced, hopping up and down a couple of times to shake off the pain. "You w-w-w-wound me, Richie," he said, laughing. By the time Bill had his hands untied, he was beside Eddie and lifting him off the ground, bridal style.

"Don't I get a say in this?" Eddie whined, kicking his legs.

"Sorry, Spagheds," Richie laughed, spinning them around once. "By the power vests in Bill by the planet of Bepin he now pronounces us husband and wife. Kiss me." He puckered his lips and made an exaggerated smoochy noise.

Eddie flopped back, kicking his legs in an effort to dislodge his

captor. "Vested, Richie, not vests," he said, "And not on your life." He flicked him in the forehead. Seeing as Bill would be no help, still doubled over in laughter, he reached his hand for the designated sane friend. "Stan, a little help here?"

No such luck. Stan took a step back out of Eddie's reach, shaking his head. "You're both beyond help," he said, looking over at Bill for help, finding none. Instead, he sat on the merry go round and pulled his knees into his chest, observing their antics from a safe distance.

"Kiss me," he repeated, leaning in closer to Eddie again with a laugh.

"No," he yelped, pressing his hand against Richie's face and extending his arm to grant him some space. "You might be contagious." Richie licked the inside of his palm. Eddie winced, wiping his hand on Richie's cheek in retaliation. "Scratch that. You're definitely contagious." Richie pulled him tighter and spun him again. Growling, he smacked him directly on the chest. "Get. Off." He tried to wrench himself out of his grip once more.

Richie was not the type to take no for an answer. "Kiss me and I will," he teased.

"I hate you," Eddie groaned feebly, annoyed, and draped his arm over his friend's shoulder. He made sure he was still making eye contact with Richie either way, in case it might help his cause.

It didn't. Richie didn't buy that for a second. Instead, he repeated Han's line. "I know."

Eddie wrinkled his nose in disgust, then leaned forward. He pressed a rushed peck to Richie's lips and pulled back like he'd received an electrical shock. "Now, get off of me, Trashmouth," he said, and Richie, thankfully, obliged, opening his arms and letting him hop down. "Anyone have any gum?" he whined, wiping his mouth exaggeratedly as he sat next to Stan.

"That's right, Freshen Up Extra for next time," Richie teased, grabbing the bar of the merry go round and running with all his might as his friends held on for dear life. "I'll be waiting in your Orbit, my Juicy Fruit!" Eddie groaned as Bill added his strength to the spinning. "And

it'll be Double Your Pleasure while you wait for my Big Red Trident, Chiklet!" The runners jumped onto the spinning platform and laughed, trying to keep their balance as it slowed to a halt.

After their appointment at City Hall, the group climbed into Ben's SUV and rode together to the Italian restaurant in Battery Park, where Richie had rented out the back room for just them. Standing at the door, waiting for the Losers, was Patty Uris. She hadn't been able to get off work early enough to join them for the ceremony but promised to join them for lunch. Even though she hadn't been through the same things her husband and his friends had, she was welcomed in with open arms. Especially by Bev, who joked about the vaguely incestuous nature of most of their relationships meaning that there was an egregious lack of women in their lives.

When they reached the dessert portion of their lunch, the agreed-upon "real vows" were upon them. Eddie leaned in close to Richie and whispered, "Do me a favor. For the sake of my poor, healing heart, no mom jokes and minimal penis jokes in your vows."

Richie's hand fluttered to his chest, aghast. "What do you take me for?" He laughed, unable to keep up the pretense.

"A comedian who claims that his middle name is Trashmouth who has been the bane of my existence for the last thirty-odd years," Eddie groaned, leaning over and kissing him again, for the millionth time that afternoon.

Leaning into the offense, Richie pouted exaggeratedly. "Is that what you all think of me?" He stood up only to sit himself down in a lap across the room. "Stanley, am I the bane of your existence?"

The man eyed his friend carefully, patting him on the cheek fondly. "When have I ever, ever let you think, for even a fleeting moment, that there was ever any doubt of that?"

In mock outrage, Richie's jaw dropped open. "There was that one night, down in-" he leaned forward, whispering something about the clubhouse that no one but Stanley could hear.

"Alright, enough," he said, edging the manchild off of his lap

hurriedly. "That's a lie and you know it." The size of his eyes and the blush on his cheeks led everyone in the room to believe that whatever it was that Richie had said had been 100% true. Bev shot Richie a curious look and his responding look simply read as Another Time.

"Are you two doing this or what?" Ben asked, seeming to miss the exchange entirely.

"Oh, Stanny boy, the mic, the mic is calling," Richie singsonged, pulling a begrudging Stan to his feet.

"What mic?" He asked, sinking back into the booth next to his friends. "This Mike? He's otherwise occupied," he said, tapping one half of the lovestruck couple who had caught the "bouquet" and "garter" (a napkin and tie, since they were in a pinch). When Mike pulled back, all Stan could do was laugh at the absolutely dumbfounded look on Bill's face. He seemed to have forgotten that there were other people in the room at all.

"No, my dear," Richie said, putting on an affected Mid-Atlantic, old Hollywood accent. "No. You were supposed to be our officiant and we went and pulled the rug out from under you, so, now that we're to the part of the evening where we're going to make fools of ourselves and embarrass you all with our love in the process, we're dragging you into it," he said, tugging him forward to the center of the room beside him.

Eddie rolled his eyes, joining his husband and best friend on their feet. "We?" he asked, as though completely unaware of the agreement.

With a sigh, Richie corrected himself. "I. I'm dragging you into it." He rolled his eyes right back.

From across the room, Patty twisted herself to face the men, draping her arms over the back of the chair. "Go ahead, honey. You told me you already had your speech memorized in case they decided to spring something like this on you. Why waste it?" She winked at Richie as if to say 'I've got you.'

Laughing boisterously, Richie bounded toward the woman, kissing her on the cheek. "Thank you, Patty, my dear. You are a star," he added, putting an end to the accent.

"A traitor is what she is. You're supposed to be on my side," Stan said, pointing at her. She simply stuck her tongue out.

The room fell uncharacteristically silent when Richie took Eddie's hands in his with Stan beside them. Ben pulled his camera up to the table and set it up to film the exchange. "When we were kids, everyone had these secrets that they hid because, well, we had bigger fish to fry and Derry was not a place that we could ever really have been free, was it?" Stan spoke, looking between his two friends. "All those secrets. But they were for nothing. I'm here today to tell you, Richard Justin Tozier," he said, shoving his shoulder gently before turning to the other man and poking him in the arm, "and you Edward Ryan Kaspbrak that I knew the whole damn time. Just like I knew about Bill and Mike." Bev squawked out a laugh when the men across from her blanched. "Just like I knew about Bev and Ben." Bill snorted in response. Stan simply rolled his eyes. "You all are the biggest bunch of transparent idiots in the world. Can I tell you all how exhausting you were? God," he cleared his throat and shook his head. "But apparently, I was the only one who saw. I saw how lucky we were to have one another. To have found one another. And when we got called back to Derry last year, it was like nothing had changed." He looked around the room fondly. Familiar faces that he wished he'd seen grow into the adults that sat before them. "But it had. Of course, it had. Anyway..." He looked at Richie pointedly. "We spent so much time afraid; afraid of what would come next, afraid of what we might leave behind. No more. Be who you want to be." He turned to Eddie next. "Be proud. Now that we've all found someone worth holding on to, no letting go." He glanced down to their joined hands, only to see that everyone back at the table was holding hands, too. Even Patty had Bev's hand tightly between her own. "That's the thing about being Losers. We don't have anything to lose. So, here's to being true. To being brave. To standing tall. To belief. And to never forgetting that we're Losers and we always will be. This is happily ever after, or as close to it as a whole bunch of Losers get." He nodded at the couple, adding, "Now, it's time for you to write your own, starting with your vows."

Richie and Eddie looked at each other, for a moment, unsure of who should speak first. Eddie swallowed thickly and reached into the breast pocket of his jacket, holding out a sealed envelope. "There are these vows that I wrote the night after you proposed. I sealed them in an envelope and hid them in my nightstand, told you not to touch them. But here they are." Everyone chuckled lightly at the jab. "They're the typical, contrite, Richard Justin Tozier, love of my life and insipid pain in my ass, I promise to love and honor bullshit that you expect from a man who tries a little too hard to get the attention of someone who's never looked away from him once in 35 years," Eddie smiled and looked up at Richie who was, as expected, looking right back at him. "And I'm glad they are here, so you can see me do this." He tore them in half and Richie's eyes went wide. "These don't count." He tore them in half again, then once more, tossing them onto the table. Then, he pulled two pieces of paper from his wallet, one to read and one that only Richie could see that had lived in that spot since they left Derry. "Vows are what you're promising to the person you marry. I'm not the person I was when I told you I loved you, standing in the rain outside the movie theatre, or when you crawled into my bedroom the night your parents threw you out, or when we moved into that awful little apartment building with the annoying fucking author next door," he said, glancing at Bill, who laughed, "or the when we bought the house in LA and never understood why the B.H. carved in the front steps made us smile." Ben nodded, glad he'd been able to be a part of their lives, even if they hadn't known it. "I'm not the man who crashed my car when a phone number from Derry, Maine popped up on the screen," he added, looking back at Richie with a smile. "I'm not the man who thought that I could kill a fucking celestial being on my own because he hurt you and almost got myself killed in the process. I'm the man who picks fights with the love of my life over dinner because I think he's getting bored, only for him to..." his mind wandered back to the night before, and he tried to settle on a word choice that was better than the lewd sentence he'd written earlier, "surprise me and knock me out of my comfort zone again and again and again and then never end up getting to dinner anyway. The person you are now is not the person who proposed to me. He's not the man who sat at my bedside for a month. He's not the man who decided that we not tell our best friends that we'd been together since we were kids when we reunited. He's not the comedian from L.A. or the struggling student from San Fran, or the scared,

broken little boy from Derry. He's the man beside me, right now, in this moment." He felt his eyes start to prickle and he put the papers back in his wallet to take his hands. "So, going forward. Our lives have never allowed for that type of planning, not like you think I like anyway, but here's what I know I can promise and uphold." He took a deep breath and pulled a step closer to Richie. "I promise to love you, Richard Justin Tozier. I promise to love you for the rest of our lives, but not like I've loved you every day for the last 30 or like I love you right now, but to love you as you want and need and deserve as we grow from here on out." He couldn't look him in the eye anymore because Richie was already a sobbing mess. He focused, instead, on their hands linked together. "And I promise to remember each and every moment, no matter how painful, no matter how scary, no matter how much I'd like for it to have never happened at all. I promise to remember those moments because in those moments," he said, finally losing his composure and dissolving into full-fledged tears, "I've had you."

There's a moment where the only sound is eight different tear patterns. Realizing it must have been his turn, Richie groans out an exceptionally nasally, "Fuck, man. Okay," he wipes away the tears fogging his glasses. "Um. I had intended to make this funny but you just stabbed me in the chest," he joked, earning him both a strong, pointed squeeze of the hands from Eddie and a stomp on the toes from Stan. "Sorry. I'm sorry," he laughed, watching everyone else groan and narrowly avoiding the napkin Bev had balled up and tossed at him. "Okay, okay. Eduardo." Pursed lips. "Eds." An Eye Roll. "Eddie Spaghetti." A scoff. "Eddie, my love," he smiled and pulled him a little closer. "Edward Ryan Kaspbrak," he said, starting to calm down enough to make his vows. "There are a million things I feel like I'm supposed to say. I love you. I cherish you. I promise to love, honor..." he screwed up his eyebrows, seeming to search for the third word, "obey? But when have I ever done what I'm supposed to. So, I'm sure as fuck not gonna start now." Eddie laughed, squeezing Richie's hands a little. He could tell he was nervous. "Besides, we've checked literally every one of the boxes on normal vows." He swung their hands as though batting each word out of the way. "Better, worse, rich, poor, sickness, health, death do you part and as long as we both shall live." Eddie's eyes brimmed with tears and, god, maybe Eddie was the contagious one because as soon as the first one fell,

Richie was done for too. "We've done it all, babe. Maybe we waited too long to do this, because what else is there to say?" he shrugged, voice absolutely wrecked with emotion. "But, I'm glad we waited because I can't imagine our wedding any other way than this." He took a deep breath, attempting to keep his composure. "When we were kids, you had a poster in your bedroom that said the only thing constant is change. Some Greek philosopher or something nerdy, like that. It was next to the window that I used to sneak in and out of, so it's been plastered in my subconscious for thirty-odd years. I used to think, with all of the bumps in the road, that it was like, the deepest shit, especially as we got closer to moving out on our own. But now, I know," he shook his head, then widened his eyes, "that guy was full of shit." Eddie let out an embarrassing, wet laugh. "In my world, the only thing constant is you." Richie adjusted his glasses, then steadied himself pulling Eddie in even closer. "Still, a vow, according to Google, is a solemn promise. A noun. Which is interesting, because a verb- it's what you do, right? That's what those commercials always said, right?" He gave a half-smile and lowered his head. He was rambling. Stick to the cards. That's what they'd told him on the last press tour, right? Stick to the cards. "A vow is something you're actively promising to do or to be. So, what I want to vow to you, in front of all of these Losers, pardon me..." he looked back at Patty over his shoulder, knowing she really didn't enjoy the use of the word as a term of endearment, and corrected, "dearly beloved friends, is to be everything you've always been to me." He stopped, taking a deep breath, realizing he was finally done and this was almost over. Sure, they'd been married for hours, but now, standing in front of their friends, saying it their own way, they were really, truly married. He was a breath away from sealing the deal and finally marrying Eddie Kasprak, for real. "A constant among life-changing variables."

Stunned tears. Sniffles. Silence. They'd done it. They'd made it through their own vows seriously. No bickering, no bullshit, no punchlines. Just honest promises and confessions of love and each of the Losers was pretty sure that they'd never cried harder at a wedding. "Shit, guys," Stan said, wiping his eyes, trying to pull himself together. "By the power vested in me by the State of New York, I now pronounce you husbands." Richie and Eddie stood, staring at each other expectantly. Stan tapped Eddie on the shoulder and poked a thumb at Richie. "If you don't kiss him, I'm going to."

Their friends laughed as they kissed, completely lost to the world. "Since when does anyone have to tell them to do that?" he asked, sliding back into his seat next to Patty and kissing her sweetly.

"I picked the wrong one," Bev laughed, nestling into Ben's arm.

Switching the camera back to still shot and taking a picture of the newlyweds' first official kiss, he laughed. "Honestly, I think you did. They've got it over me in spades in the words department."

Mike shook his head, watching as the pair pulled apart and laughed, sharing a private joke. "Eddie literally wrote that standing at the counter of the drugstore this morning." Bill nodded, affirming it when the rest seemed completely thrown.

"I guess it was like coming home," Stan joked.

"Nah," Bev answered, amused by the pair who seemed to be slow dancing together, despite the lack of music. She took a swig of Ben's beer and smiled, "They've always been each other's home."